

Friday, November 17, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Cypress Heights Academy (BEN: 16028416) I am filing a Petition for Waiver regarding the following Form 471 numbers: 533588, 537630, and 537700.

According to Funding Commitment Decision Letters dated September 19, 2006, the aforementioned Form 471s were denied funding due to insufficient documentation. Specifically, the Item 21 documents were not provided to PIA.

There were two primary factors which contributed to our failure to provide the necessary Item 21 documents. First and foremost Cypress Heights Academy is located in East Baton Rouge Parish, which suffered significant damage due to Hurricane Katrina and is recognized as located in the "Hurricane Katrina Disaster Area". The school building itself suffered minimal damage due to the storm, but the initial influx of students from other areas and their eventual mobility contributed to a chaotic environment in terms of the E-Rate process. Secondly, but also related to the effects of Hurricane Katrina was turnover and new hiring of faculty and staff of our small school, which required human resources to be allocated to the school's core competency of educating youth. In turn, the effect of this turnover placed strain on administrative functions like E-Rate and specifically, our ability to promptly send Item 21 documents.

A third and ancillary factor which contributed to our failure to provide the necessary Item 21 documents was my absence from work due to illness and international travel, which prevented me from properly receiving the facsimiles and emails of the PIA team requesting the Item 21 documents. Unfortunately, the person responsible for helping in my absence was lost due to the turnover regarding Hurricane Katrina issues mentioned above.

For these reasons we are filing a Petition for Waiver so that our Item 21 documents may be accepted by PIA thereby resolving the "insufficient documentation" cited in the FCDL for the Form 471s "denied" statuses. It is our sincere hope to continue the E-Rate process to its conclusion of funding the aforementioned Form 471s. Granting such a waiver would show justice to Cypress Heights Academy in light of the difficulties we are overcoming and in the public interest which the FCC serves. This waiver, if granted, would give the students affected by Hurricane Katrina the technological resources they need to continue learning.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dunbar  
Cypress Heights Academy